

## Q&A with Maj Gen Scott, DCMA



In March 2004, *CM* magazine staff interviewed Maj Gen Darryl Scott (USAF), as an accomplished member and leader of NCMA who has had several recent promotions. Maj Gen Scott is now the director of the Defense Contract Management Agency in Alexandria, Virginia, and was promoted to major general by President Bush in February 2004.

### *What is DCMA's mission?*

As a DOD combat support agency, Defense Contract Management Agency (DCMA) provides customer-focused acquisition support and contract management services to ensure worldwide warrior readiness, 24/7. DCMA's 10,500 acquisition professionals are DOD's "eyes and ears" in the factories. They ensure industry's products meet performance requirements and are delivered on time and at the agreed-to costs. Headquartered in Alexandria, VA, with 65 major field locations with over 750 locations worldwide, DCMA oversees 335,000 contracts worth about \$900 billion. This includes responsibility for annual test acceptance and delivery of more than 1,200 aircraft from defense contractors to the U.S. government and other countries under the foreign military sales program. The agency strives to be an indispensable partner, providing its military and civilian agency customers flexible and responsive acquisition life cycle solutions.

### *DOD is committed to transformation, becoming a more efficient, more responsive organization. How is DCMA transforming itself?*

To support our customers, we have to transform to stay in the game. We have been customer-focused from day one, so that is not new. What is new here is the need to recognize that our customers require DCMA support in areas besides traditional contract management. So, the mission statement has expanded to cover the "acquisition support" activities we do more of every day. We have knowledge, information, and insights that cut across industry, multiple locations of major contractors, product lines, processes, and different phases of the acquisition process. We are going to expand the ways we make those capabilities work to satisfy emerging customer requirements for our support. We want to accomplish our challenging mission with a

flexible organization that is adaptable to the support requirements of customers who are in a period of significant transformation. The organization structure will be flexible and will vary in appearance, based on the needs of customers and the unique nature of the contractor(s) being overseen. Our business, technical, and support processes will apply across the agency as they do now, but will be adaptable to local conditions. This adaptability will allow local commanders to make decisions based on what is best for their customers, and what makes sense for the industry segment or contractor(s) under them. Our flexibility will allow us to use our industry and acquisition knowledge and experience to provide proactive support. In the future, we will provide the customers what they need before they know they need it.

### *What is DCMA's role as a combat support agency?*

We train with U.S. soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines and travel with them whenever and wherever they need our help. Since 1993, DCMA has deployed people to Iraq, Afghanistan, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Bosnia, Rwanda, and other locations. DCMA is ready, willing, and proud to deploy whenever U.S. forces are fighting a war, keeping the peace, or battling a disaster. One of DCMA's major missions is to provide contingency contract administration services because the services rely heavily on contractors to provide logistical support when deployed.

Conducting combat missions in remote locations can often require providing massive amounts of food, water, supplies, and building materials. Meals must be served, water must be purified, fuel must be tested and distributed, and soldiers and civilians must be sheltered. To ensure that there are always enough qualified people to get the job done, DCMA dispatches special teams of contracting experts to accompany troops as they deploy throughout the world.

DCMA is also responsible for ensuring the safe and proper handling of government aircraft by overseeing their manufacture and overhaul by contractors at facilities around the world. DCMA aircrews perform test and acceptance flights prior to delivering these aircraft to the military services, other U.S. government agencies, and participating countries in the foreign military sales program.

### *What are your responsibilities as director of DCMA?*

As the director, I am responsible for leading and managing more than 10,500 civilian and military leaders, managers

and technical experts to perform worldwide acquisition life cycle contract management for DOD weapon system programs, spares, supplies, and services. This includes ensuring on-time delivery, at the right cost, and in accordance with prescribed performance standards.

### *How did you first enter the contracting field—what drew you to it?*

In 1979, the U.S. Air Force placed me in a master's degree program with a follow-on career broadening assignment in contracting. I didn't know anything about contracting at the time, but quickly learned that I enjoyed solving business problems. I was fortunate to have supervisors who were great teachers and mentors. I was able to combine my technical knowledge from my old career field with what they taught me to craft solutions that really met my customers' needs—I found that very satisfying. Later, my contracting assignments gave me an opportunity to learn about and experience a broad cross section of what the defense department does—everything from weapons system R&D to how high-tech manufacturing facilities operate; from leading large organizations to forging agreements with other NATO nations. And of course, I got to work with some of the best and brightest, hardest working folks you'll ever meet. It's all been a blessing that I would not trade for anything!

### *Along the way in your career, what has been your greatest challenge, and your greatest success?*

My greatest challenge continues in my new job, answering the questions, "How can we do a better job of meeting the needs of our customers? How can we improve the defense acquisition process to ensure that we help provide our soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines with the best possible products, at the right time and at the right price?" This is a never-ending challenge that will always be with us. I believe we do a much better job of this that we did 10, 15, or 20 years ago and, no doubt, we'll do even better tomorrow, 10 or 20 years from now.

I was, and still am, extremely proud of the time I spent in San Diego working with defense contractors to meet the immediate requirements of our military forces in executing Operation Desert Storm. I was blessed to work with an extremely dedicated group of acquisition professionals who worked around the clock to assure that our combatant commanders received everything they needed—from cruise missiles to personal navigation devices and space systems support that helped our coalition forces achieve an overwhelming victory. This experience convinced me that the men and women involved in the defense acquisition process are absolutely essential to our success on the battlefield. I am equally proud to see that that kind of

response has been institutionalized at DCMA. If anything, we have learned to "kick it up a notch" to support the global war on terrorism.

### *What goals do you expect to achieve as director of DCMA?*

I'm very proud to be a part of this great organization and to be associated with such a dedicated group of professionals. I've been pleased with the progress DCMA has achieved in implementing both the spirit and intent of Secretary Rumsfeld's goal of transforming the defense department. I believe DCMA is on the leading edge of this change process and it's exciting for me to be part of it.

My principal goal is to quarterback this transformation effort to make DCMA the indispensable acquisition partner. To do that, we have to take on another goal: to shape DCMA's workforce of tomorrow—to ensure our future leaders have the experience, wisdom, and tools they need to meet our increasingly important national security requirements. DCMA is a very experienced group of professionals, but the average age of our employees is nearly 50! I worry that as our more experienced employees retire, we need to refresh our skill base. We must focus now on preparing our younger colleagues to take the lead when we move on.

Although this is a formidable challenge, it's exciting and eminently doable. We are now only beginning to tap the vast potential of America's diverse and well-educated society. I want to help put the pieces in place to assure that tomorrow's men and women of DCMA will be even more skilled, more capable, and more responsive than we are today. **CM**

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